

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 12, 2015

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Burwell:

As strong advocates for improving access to women's health care, we are writing to offer our support for the new guidance on the birth control benefit that aims to ensure insurers' compliance with the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) requirement to provide full coverage for all FDA-approved contraceptive methods with no copay.

Reducing unintended pregnancies through increased access to contraception is a worthy goal and we applaud the recent decision by HHS to include all FDA-approved methods of contraception as preventive services under the ACA. This important decision will allow women across the country to access their contraceptive of choice with no out-of-pocket cost other than their monthly premium.

In 2014, 67 percent of privately insured U. S. women accessed an oral contraceptive with no-copay, up from 15 percent in 2012, according to a Guttmacher Institute study published in the journal *Contraception*. Similar trends were seen with women using injectable contraceptives, rings, and IUDs. Studies have shown that when contraception is covered by insurance, women choose to use longer, more effective forms of contraception, experiencing fewer unplanned pregnancies as a result.

Although more women are now able to access contraception without a copay, insurers continue to create barriers. Some insurers are not covering all FDA-approved methods. Additionally, through the use of so-called "reasonable medical management," insurers are restricting access to long-acting birth control and steering women away from accessing their contraceptive method of choice. Determining which method of contraception is right for a woman is a personal decision that should be made with her doctor.

We strongly support the newly-issued guidance to clarify the scope of the requirement and ensure that women have reliable and meaningful access to their contraceptive method of choice.

The Department of Health and Human Services should be closely monitoring and ensuring compliance with the law, and working with all stakeholders to reach that end.

Specifically, we request that you:

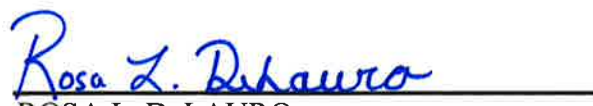
- Increase consumer education and awareness of the women's health benefits of the ACA, specifically contraception; and
- Proactively encourage states to properly enforce compliance, and ensure that local stakeholders and states develop plans of action for compliance.


We look forward to working with you on this issue to provide women with these crucial preventive services.

Sincerely,



SUZANNE BONAMICI
Member of Congress



LOIS CAPPS
Member of Congress

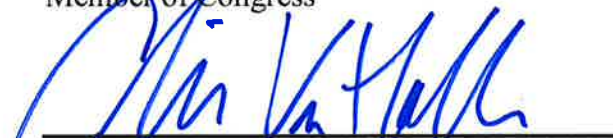

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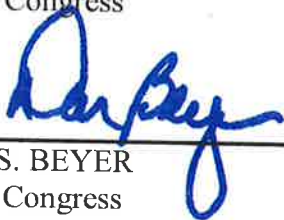

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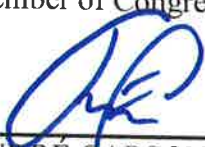
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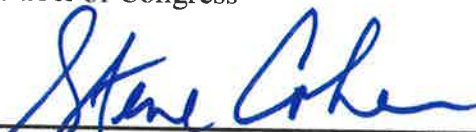
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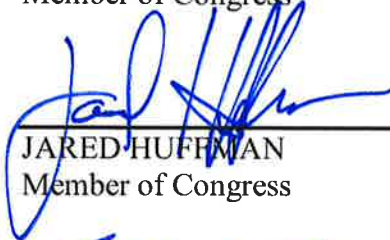
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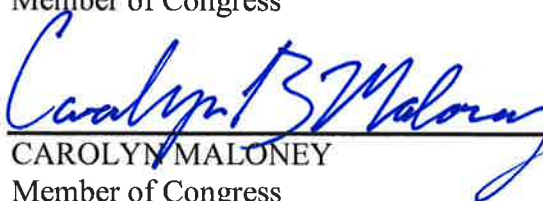
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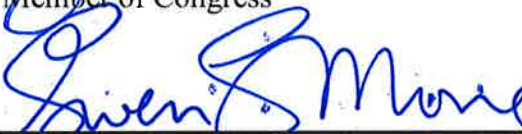
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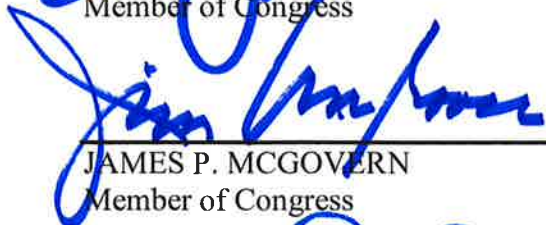
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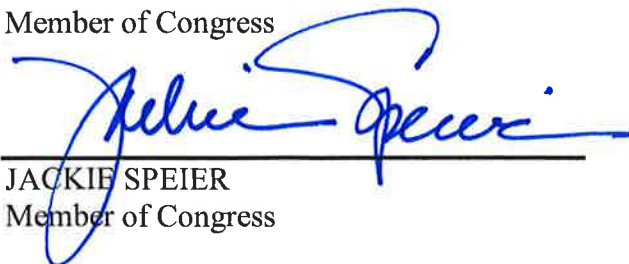
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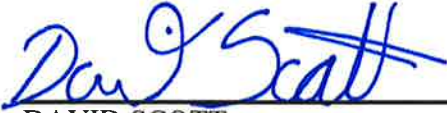
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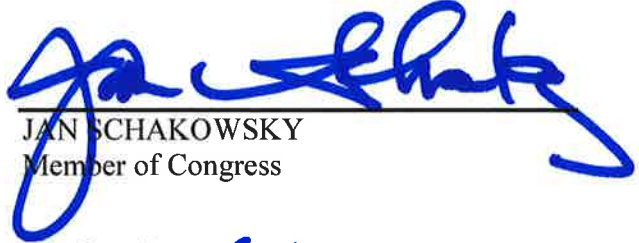
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CC: Department of Labor, Secretary Thomas E. Perez
Department of Treasury, Secretary Jacob J. Lew
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Administrator Andrew Slavitt